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Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----------070074 061421Z /45
R 061045Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9458
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MUNICH
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 9647

EXDIS

BELGRADE FOR USDEL CSCE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT SHUM CSCE UR
SUBJECT: THE CSCE OBSERVATION GROUP

REF: MOSCOW 9534

SUMMARY: CSCE OBSERVATION GROUP MEMBER GINZBURG FACES UP TO 10 YEARS IN PRISON ON CHARGES OF ANTI-SOVIET ACTIVITY. THE AUTHORITIES ARE CONTINUING THEIR ATTACK ON THE CSCE GROUP. AS THEIR REPRESSION INCREASES THE SOVIETS WILL PROBABLY BECOME EVEN MORE HOSTILE ON THE SUBJECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE NECT FEW MONTHS . END SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO PRESS SOURCES VALENTIN TURCHIN WAS BROUGHT IN FOR INTERROGRATION JULY 4, DURING THE COURSE OF WHICH HE WAS TOLD THAT CSCE OBSERVATION GROUP MEMBER ALEKSANDR GINZBURG WOULD BE CHARGED WITH ANTI-SOVIET ACTIVITY (ARTICLE 70 OF THE RSFSR CRIMINAL CODE, MAX-
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IMUM PENALY 10 YEARS). WITH THIS ANNOUNCEMENT WE NOW
HAVE INFORMATION ON ALL OF THE JAILED MEMBERS OF THE CSCE GROUP. ANATOLIY SHCHARANSKIY WILL PROBABLY BE CHARGE UNDER ARTICLE 64, TREASON, AND YURIY ORLOV UNDER ARTICLE 190-1 ANTI-SOVIET PROPAGANDA. TWO MEMBERS OF THE UKRAINIAN CHAPTER OF THE HELSINKI

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GROUP, RUDENKO AND TIKHIY, HAVE ALREADY BEEN SENTENCED
TO 7 AND 10 YEARS, RESPECTIVELY UNDER THE UKRAINIAN
CODE'S EQUIVALENT OF ARTICLE 70.

2. WE HAVE NO INDICATION OF THE TIMING OF THE THREE
TRIALS STILL TO COME BUT WE ARE INCLINED TO THINK THAT
THEY WILL ALL BE HELD BETWEEN BOW AND THE OPENING
OF THE MAIN BELGRADE CONFERENCE. IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT
THE SOVIT AUTHORITIES WISH TO GET THE MATTER OF THE CSCE GROUP
OUT OF THE WAY BEFORE BELGRADE II BEGINS IN AN EFFORT
TO DAMP DOWN SOME OF THE INEVITABLE WESTERN CRITICISM
CONCERNING THE REPRESSION OF THE ORLOV GROUP. ANOTHER
REASON FOR HOLDING THE TRAILS IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS
IS THATIT IS SUMMER, A PERIOD WHEN WOVIET SECURITY AUTHORITIES
COUNT ON VACTATIONS IN THE WEST AND IN THE SOVIET UNION
TO MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE WEST TO LEARN OF
REPRESSIVE MEASURES AND TO RESPOND TO THEM.

3. THE RELTIVELY HARSH SENTENCES AGAINS THE TWO
UKRAINIAN ACTIVISTS PRESUMABLY RESULT FROM THE FACT
THAT THEY ARE LESS WELL KNOWN IN THE WEST THAN ARE THE
THREE JAILED MOSCOW DISSIDENTS. SOVIET AUTHORITIES MAY
ALSO HAVE SEEN THE UKRAINIAN NATIOALISM AND FELT
IT NECESSARY TO REPRESS THIS MANIFESTATION PARTICULARLY
HARSHLY. WHILE PREDICTION OF SEVERITY OF THE SENTENCES FOR
SHCHARANSKIY, ORLOV AND GINZBURG IS RISKY, WE THINK IT LIKELY THAT
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SHCHARANSKIY WILL BE IMPRISONED FOR 15 YEARS. GINZBURG'S
BAD HEALTH AND THE PROBABLITY THAT THE
COULD NOT SURVIVE A LONG PRISON TERM MAY WELL MILITATE
IN FAVOR OF HIS RECEIVING RELATIVELY LENIENT TREAT-
MENT. ORLOV'S CHARGES PROVIDED FOR A MAXIMUM OF THREE
YEARS IN PRISON; BY SOVIET STANDARDS THIS IS NOT A
GREAT DEAL.

4. SEVERAL PROMINENT MEMBERS OF THE GROUP ARE STILL
AT LIBERTY IN MOSCOW. WE THINK IT UNLIKELY THAT THE
AUTHORITIES WILL MOVE AGAINST YELENA BONNER (SAKHAROV'S
SIFE) OR AGAINST GENERAL GRIGORYENKO WHOSE HEALTH
IS EXTREMELY DELICATE. VLADIMIR SLEPAK IS ALSO
UNLIKELY TO BE ARRESTED IN CONNECTION WITH THE
SHCHARANSKIY CASE ALTHOUGH HE COULD, OF COURSE, BE
DETAINED AT ANY TIME BECAUSE OF HIS ACTIVITIES IN
CONNECTION WITH REFUSENIKS.

5. THE DECISION TO PUT THE THREE MOSCOW DISSIDENTS ON
TRIAL IS A CLEAR RESPONSE TO THE WEST IN GENERAL AND
TO THE UNITED STATED IN PARTICULAR. SOVIET AUTHOR-
ITIES APPEAR TO HAVE DECIDED THAT IT IS WORTH EXTRI-

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PATING ORGANIZED HUMAN RIGHTS DISSIDENTS EVEN AT THE
COST OF A GREAT DEAL OF UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY IN
THE WEST. THE SOVIETS' HOSTILITY ON THIS ASPECT OF HUMAN
RIGHTS WLL PROBABLY INCREASE AND THEY ARE LIKELY TO BE
EVEN MORE PRICKLY IN INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS AND
OFFENSIVE IN THEIR POWN MEDIA PROPAGANDA THAN HAS
BEEN THE CASE IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS.
TOON

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